

Seattle
Youth Violence
Prevention
Initiative



SAFE YOUTH, SAFE COMMUNITY

A Progress Report | 2011





The **mission** of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative is to **prevent and reduce youth violence**, which has disproportionately affected communities of color in Seattle, through **coordinated, accountable community mobilization** to identify youth at risk of perpetuating or being a victim of violence and **connect them with needed support** in reaching their full potential.

Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

City of Seattle

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The rate of violent crimes in
Seattle continues to decline.
But the violent injury or death of
even one young person is too much.

**To ensure that Seattle has safe youth and a safe community,
the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative...**

- ... **connects and coordinates** services to youth through the establishment of Neighborhood Networks led by longstanding community organizations.
- ... **assesses** the needs of at-risk youth, helps them set goals and connects them to the help and services they need to succeed.
- ... **deploys** street outreach workers to meet and engage youth wherever they are.
- ... **trains and employs** youth and helps prepare them for the world of work.
- ... **mediates conflicts** before they escalate by deploying School Emphasis Officers in four middle schools.
- ... **teaches** youth how to manage anger.
- ... **empowers** youth by engaging them in the design and creation of their own recreation and arts programming at youth and community centers.
- ... **connects** youth to caring adults as mentors.
- ... **engages and funds** community and grassroots groups to provide programs and services through matching grants and sustaining funds.

A message from Seattle's Mayor

Seattle residents care deeply about the youth of our city. We recognize that by caring for the safety and well being of our community's youngest and most vulnerable members, we create a safer and more vital community for us all. That core, shared value is what led to the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI).

The need for SYVPI was underscored two years after its creation when I launched my own Youth and Families Initiative to identify the challenges that youth and families face and to collectively mobilize toward solutions. Through a series of workshops, community caucuses and meetings with youth, we learned that to achieve that goal, we must address issues such as:

- Neighborhood safety
- Youth involvement in gangs and violence
- Safe places and positive activities during after-school hours
- Jobs and job training, and
- Caring adults to mentor, coach and support our young people

SYVPI is addressing these priorities by engaging neighborhood leadership, nonprofit organizations, schools and other groups to connect youth at risk of perpetuating or being victimized by violence with jobs, mentors, after-school programs and more. The Initiative has drawn upon the successes of other cities and is quickly becoming a model in its own right for addressing and preventing youth violence.

This first progress report provides an overview of this important work. While the Initiative is still in its early stages, it already is making a significant impact. Youth and their families, residents and business owners, service providers and community stakeholders support SYVPI and express hope for its expansion through more programs, additional neighborhoods and a broader focus to reach even more youth.

I share our community's excitement and commitment and invite you to learn more by reading this report. Thank you for supporting the youth of Seattle.



Michael McGinn



Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

A message from the Initiative's Director

Safe communities begin with safe youth. And ensuring the safety of youth begins in the neighborhoods where they live, learn, work and play.

The neighborhood-based approach of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI) lies at the core of its success. Existing community-based organizations – which SYVPI has re-envisioned as Neighborhood Networks – lead the Initiative and serve as the hubs for connecting youth at risk of violence with needed support. The Networks provide ongoing engagement and follow-up to ensure that the youth they serve are truly receiving or connected to the resources that they need.



While important practices and procedures are the same across the Neighborhood Networks, the ways they engage and mobilize the youth they serve are very different. That's because each of the neighborhoods – the Central Area, Southeast Seattle and Southwest Seattle – has very different characteristics. By addressing each neighborhood's unique needs, drawing upon their strengths and engaging their residents, businesses and other members, the Initiative has created the ideal support structure for youth at risk of committing or being a victim of violence. We call it

the power of the network!

In this inaugural progress report to our community, we outline the comprehensive strategies we are implementing in Seattle to harness the power of the network to connect youth to their caring community, offer them meaningful options for fulfilling their potential and create environments for them to live safely and successfully.

We are heartened by the response to and results of our first two years of work. Much more remains to be done. We look forward to working with you to ensure the future of our youth and our Seattle community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mariko Lockhart".

Mariko Lockhart

The history of the Initiative

In 2008, five youth were tragically shot and killed in the city of Seattle by other youth. This was the breaking point for a community that had seen levels of youth violence continue to escalate while other crime rates sunk to all time lows. Community residents demanded action, and the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative was created.

How it works

The Initiative began in 2009 by dispatching an interagency team to reach out to the community and to research what was working in other cities around the country to reduce youth violence. A comprehensive, community-based plan was developed to combine evidence-based strategies with innovative grassroots services. Each of the strategies funded by the Initiative provides an important component to a holistic approach to reducing youth violence.

In order to maximize the impact of allocated resources, the Initiative focuses on the three Seattle neighborhoods most affected by youth violence. We work with youth who are between the ages of 12 and 17; who live or go to school in Central, Southeast or Southwest Seattle; and who:

- Have been convicted of violent offenses and released
- Have been arrested but not detained

- are middle school students at risk of chronic truancy or multiple suspensions due to violent behavior; and/or
- Are victims of violence and their friends and associates who may be at risk of retaliation

Once funding and contracted services were in place, we began to spread the word to schools, youth service providers and community groups to inform them about the Initiative's focus. Soon, youth were being referred by the hundreds, leading to our current enrollment of more than **1,100 youth**.

Today, a team of 50+ public and nonprofit professionals implements the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative in three **Neighborhood Networks**, working together to change lives by connecting youth to services and programs to uniquely address their specific needs.



Our goals

SYVPI sets ambitious goals to be a national leader in reducing youth violence by aiming for:

- 50 percent reduction in juvenile court referrals for violence
- 50 percent reduction in suspensions and expulsions from selected middle schools due to violence-related incidents

Greg: A success story

By the time Greg* was 14 years old, he was doing poorly in school, abusing drugs and alcohol, belonged to a gang and had already been in trouble with the law.

After being referred to SYVPI, he decided to focus on changing his life. He stopped using drugs, left the gang and enrolled in Southwest Educational Center, where he was an exemplary student. He completed the program and enrolled at Chief Sealth High School, where he was on track to graduate on time with plans to attend college.

Greg's hard work not only paid off for himself, but served as inspiration to his friends and family. His turnaround motivated his younger brother, Richard, to succeed in school, too. Greg's story is not only a personal success story but a success story for his entire community.

*Name changed to protect privacy

The Power of the Network!

The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative has created a system of neighborhood-based interventions and services aimed at keeping youth and communities safe.

Youth enter our system through a variety of opportunities. They may be identified by schools as being truant, suspended for fighting, victims of violence or otherwise at risk of violence. They may be arrested, detained or on probation for truancy, civil or criminal offenses. Or, they may be recognized by SYVPI outreach workers as involved in gangs or in violence with firearms.

However they come to us – through the courts, schools, faith communities or other avenues – all are treated individually and uniquely. The Neighborhood Networks assess their needs and then connect them to the resources they need to stay safe and be successful. This flow chart helps visualize **the power of the network**.





**SYVPI's
Street
Outreach
Team**



NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS:

Central:

Therapeutic Health Services

Southwest:

Southwest Youth & Family Services

Southeast:

Smilow Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club of King County with Atlantic Street Center, Therapeutic Health Services and Sea Mar Community Health Centers



**Case
Management**
Atlantic Street Center,
Consejo, Powerful Voices,
SafeFutures, SeaMar,
Southwest Youth &
Family Services

Mentoring
4 C Coalition,
Big Brothers Big Sisters

Parks & Rec
Power of Place

ART
Aggression
Replacement
Training

Employment
Seattle Youth Employment
Program, Ashoka's Youth
Venture, King County Superior
Court, Powerful Voices,
SWYFS, Metro Center YMCA

**School
Emphasis
Officers**



**Community
Matching Grant
Projects**

**Out
of network
services**
Mental health,
education, drug and
alcohol rehab, etc.

STRATEGY 1:

The Initiative connects and coordinates services to youth through the establishment of Neighborhood Networks led by longstanding community organizations.

Neighborhood Networks Lead Agencies

Central:

Therapeutic Health Services

Southwest: Southwest Youth & Family Services

Southeast: Smilow Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club of King County, leading a consortium with Atlantic Street Center, Sea Mar Community Health Centers and Therapeutic Health Services

Our neighborhood-based approach to reducing youth violence represents a remarkable collaboration among the City of Seattle and community organizations who serve youth and families. By establishing Neighborhood Networks in Central, Southeast and Southwest Seattle – each served by a community-based organization that is the go-to hub for youth services for that area – we ensure that youth and families can go to a central location in their community for help in assessing and addressing their needs.

When youth are referred to and enroll in the Initiative, they become part of this interconnected SYVPI Network comprised of staff and caring community volunteers. They are connected to programs and services that meet their needs and continually monitored to ensure they remain engaged and are able to move on to new programs should their needs change. Because all Neighborhood Networks stay in touch with each other and their partner organizations, we build a strong connected safety net for youth.

"I'm really glad I found Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. When I have had problems at home, I have been able to talk with [the staff at the Network]. They help me with my drug and alcohol problem. [They] are trying to keep me safe and keep me from being locked up all the time. What they are doing is helping me be successful in life."

INITIATIVE YOUTH

STRATEGY 2:

The Initiative assesses the needs of at-risk youth, helps them set goals and connects them to the help and services they need to succeed.

Case managers meet with SYVPI youth and, together, they craft an individual plan that will put youth who've gone astray on a track to success. The case managers on the Initiative team – who represent diversity of race, gender, language, ethnicity and background – connect youth to the services they need to successfully implement their plan, often serving as life coaches for young men and young women who are facing many different challenges.

"SYVPI has helped me with connecting with other programs and organizations that helped me advance in some of my goals and accomplishments. For example, [my case manager] helped me get into school, work programs, [and with] personal issues and a couple of life lessons."

INITIATIVE YOUTH



PHOTO: Erika Schultz/The Seattle Times

STRATEGY 3:

The Initiative deploys street outreach workers to meet and engage youth wherever they are.

SYVPI's street outreach team members know the streets, the neighborhoods and the youth because they've been there themselves. They reach out to youth wherever they are with a consistent message: you **can** make positive changes in your life... and we're here to help your life on the right track. The Initiative team is modeled after similar operations in Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

"Kids don't know how to take out their anger, so they join gangs. What youth need is an outreach person to work with them one on one. I look up to the outreach team. They made me open my eyes. I could have been dead a long time ago. Now I think about things differently."

INITIATIVE YOUTH

"[SYVPI outreach workers] are very well respected by the youth in the community and are able to communicate peace with the youth. I thank the outreach workers for working with us as a team. We are all part of that 'It takes a village' statement."

SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. DETECTIVE, COMMUNITY OUTREACH UNIT



STRATEGY 4:

The Initiative trains and employs youth and helps prepare them for the world of work.

Everywhere Initiative team members go throughout Seattle, we hear a consistent message: Young people want jobs and they need the skills to secure and keep those jobs. Since its inception, SYVPI has provided hundreds of youth with an array of internships that match their career interests and abilities. Youth have completed internships in the fields of health care, health and fitness, skilled trades, digital media and technology, the arts and many others.



STRATEGY 5:

The Initiative mediates conflicts before they escalate by deploying School Emphasis Officers in four middle schools.

School Emphasis Officers, or SEOs, are police officers specially selected for their interest and experience in working with youth. Our SEOs have become important members of the school teams at Denny, Aki Kurose and Washington Middle Schools and South Shore K-8. They help to mediate conflicts, mentor youth, provide a link between students and service providers, and make home visits and referrals to the Initiative when needed. The SEOs provide important extra support to students, many of whom are at risk of suspension, expulsion or high truancy.



"It has been very helpful having the folks from the SYVPI Network and all the other staff from the Initiative supporting us at our school. When we called on the School Emphasis Officer in our area, he mobilized other officers when we needed police presence and that deterred fighting from continuing. The street outreach team also worked closely to de-escalate some tensions that were building up. SYVPI support was critical in handling the situation."

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

STRATEGY 6:

The Initiative teaches youth how to manage anger.

For youth who need help in recognizing and managing their emotions and impulses so they can “think before they act,” the Initiative provides Aggression Replacement Training, or ART. This anger management strategy is a 10-week/three times per week voluntary program facilitated by certified trainers in community- and school-based sites. Because of its intensity, the program is limited in size and scope. This demanding level of commitment has proved challenging in SYVPI’s early years, and ART providers continue to make adjustments to increase attendance.



“Aggression Replacement Training changed the way I act. Now before I do anything dumb, I think about it and what might happen as a result.”

INITIATIVE YOUTH

STRATEGY 7:

The Initiative empowers youth by engaging them in the design and creation of their own recreation and arts programming at youth and community centers.

Seattle Parks & Recreation partners with the Initiative to offer a safe haven for youth and to provide challenging, constructive, hands-on educational and artistic activities. Parks & Rec offers extended hours at community centers in each of SYVPI's three neighborhoods – Garfield Teen Life Center in Central Seattle, Rainier Community Center in Southeast Seattle and Southwest Community Center in Southwest Seattle. These extended hours offer youth a safe place to go with caring adults where they can play and record music in a studio, learn job skills, participate in sports tournaments, create wearable art and much more.



STRATEGY 8:

The Initiative connects youth to caring adults as mentors.

Professional mentoring organizations bring together Initiative youth with caring adults committed to spending time together for at least one full year. By sharing interests and getting to know each other during regular quality time together, they build important relationships that benefit both the youth and the mentor. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound provides mentoring to middle school youth and the 4C Coalition focuses on court-involved youth.



Lulu: A success story

By the time she reached eighth grade, Lulu* was already falling far behind in her school work because of chronic truancy.

When she was referred to the Initiative for mentoring, her family was hesitant. They were unfamiliar with the idea of a stranger becoming a part of their lives. But before long, Lulu and her family grew to love Lulu's Big Sister and even invited her to Lulu's quinceañera celebration.

Lulu is now a sophomore in high school, attending classes regularly and very enthusiastic about going to college to become a lawyer or a counselor.

*Name changed to protect privacy

STRATEGY 9:

The Initiative engages and funds community and grassroots groups to provide programs and services through matching grants and sustaining funds.

We believe in the power of our communities, neighborhoods and partners to work collaboratively and on their own to advance the goals of the Initiative. To empower grassroots community groups to deliver services to youth, SYVPI recognized their energy, passion and creativity and created a grants program to fund their efforts to serve youth. Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods partnered with the Initiative by dedicating a portion of its Neighborhood Matching Fund to groups serving our focus population.

These funds are now managed by SYVPI and are called Community Matching Grants to fund innovative projects to enable youth to:

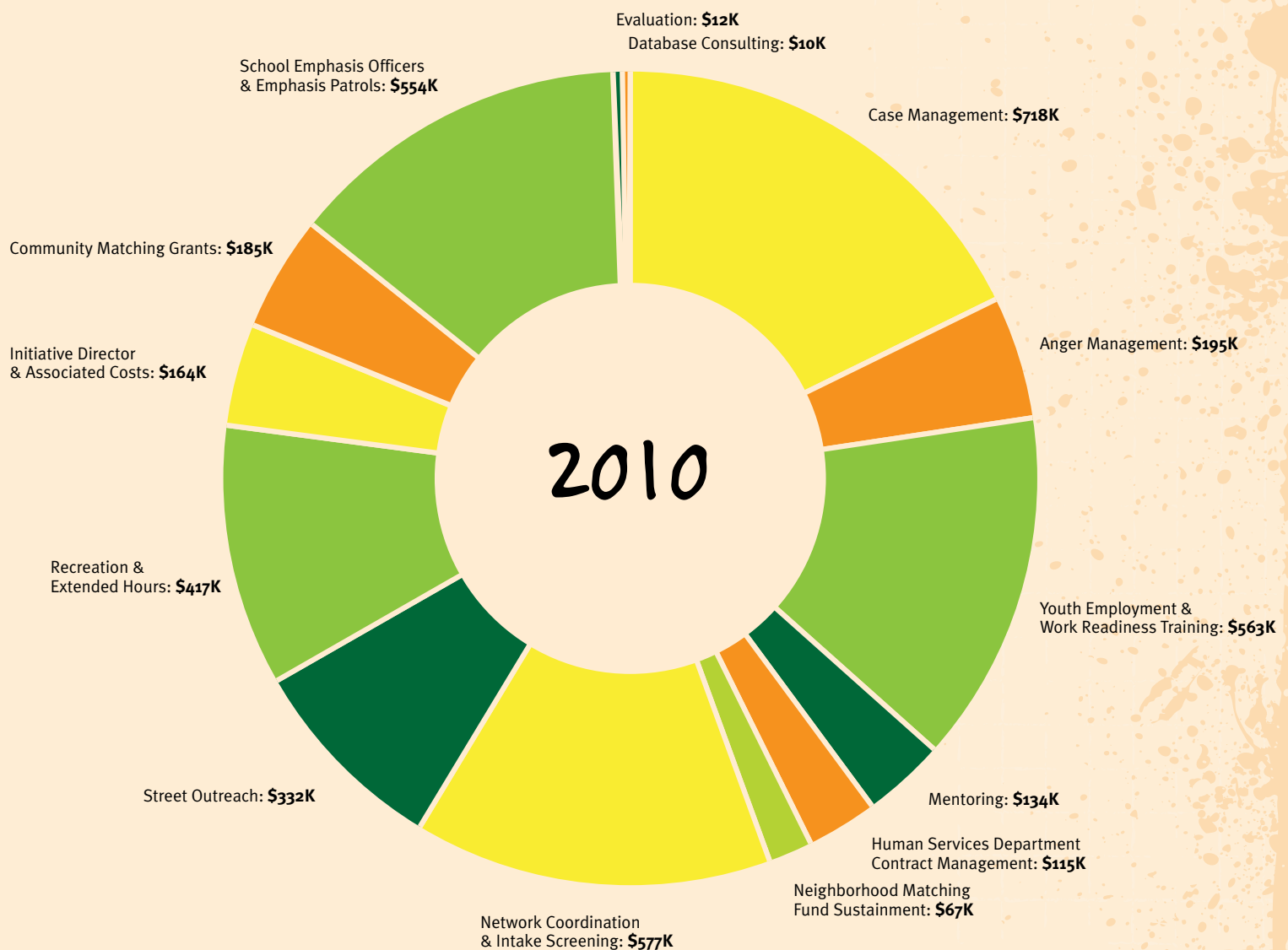
- Work with authors to write and publish their own books
- Learn about the culture and history of multi-ethnic communities in Southwest Seattle, while also earning school credit
- Learn the ins and outs of the music industry and how to record their own music
- Engage in many other creative and skill-building projects

We also recognized that some smaller grassroots groups doing great work with Initiative youth needed additional support to build sustainable programs. In 2009 and 2010, the Sustaining Fund helped support three groups as they developed plans to strengthen their organizations and build financial sustainability: Youth 180, Black on Black Crime Prevention Coalition and Game Recognize Game Urban Sports Academy.



Seattle's investment in youth violence prevention

We are grateful to the Mayor, City Council and the taxpayers of Seattle for supporting the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. We are proud to report that in 2010, 92.6 percent of funding went directly to serve at-risk youth, with only 7.4 percent dedicated to administration, management and related costs.



The value of partnerships

The community-based model on which the Initiative is built flourishes thanks to the participation of many organizations who share our passion for and commitment to reducing violence among youth. We are honored to count these outstanding partners among the valued participants in the Initiative's first two years of work.



INITIATIVE PARTNERS

Akobeen Brotherhood Organization
Alternatives to Violence Program
Aquil Basheer
Austin Foundation
Arts Corps-Youngstown
Black Child Development Institute
Camp Long
CASA START
City Year
Columbia Heights/Shaw Family
Support Collaborative
Communities In Schools of Seattle
Cortona Café
Delridge Community Center
Dino Cristofolis
El Centro de la Raza
Employment Action Resource Network
Fatherhood Program
FEEST
Foundation for Kids
Freedom Church
Freedom Outreach Seattle
From the Ground Up Resource Group
Garfield Community Center
Garfield Teen Life Center
Girl Scouts of Western Washington
– Urban Teen Journeys
Haiku Leadership
Harborview Medical Center
Harder House
Hiawatha Community Center
High Point Neighborhood Center
High Point Community Center
Jefferson Community Center

King County Police Activities League
King County Superior Court
King County Warrant Reduction Program
Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center
Loyal League
Microsoft Corporation
Miller Community Center
Mt. View Youth Services (YES Foundation)
Multicultural Counseling Services, LTD-
Music Corps –Youngstown
Neighborcare Health (Teen Clinics at Chief
Sealth HS, West Seattle HS, Denny &
Madison Middle Schools)
Neighborhood House
Pete Carroll
Port Jobs
Prevention Institute – UNITY Network
Rainier Beach Community Center
Rainier Beach Community
Empowerment Coalition
Rainier Beach Family Center
Rainier Community Center
Raising Our Youth as Leaders
(ROYAL) Project
Reclaiming Black Manhood
(Authors Larry Evans & Aaron Counts)
RecTech Technology Internship Program
Seaspot LLC /DJ Kun Luv
Seattle Aquarium
Seattle CARES
Seattle Center
Seattle Housing Authority
Seattle Jobs Initiative
Seattle Neighborhood Group
Seattle Public Schools
Seattle Seahawks

Seattle University
Ski Outreach Services
Solid Ground/AmeriCorps
South Park Community Center
South Seattle Career Link
Southwest Boys and Girls Club
Students Against Violence Everywhere
Summer of Service
SW Community Center & SWTLC
SW Community Police Team (CPT)
SW Education Center
SW Interagency
SWYFS Counseling Center
The American Academy Dropout
Recovery Program
The Breakfast Group
The Pacific Institute
Therapeutic Health Services-Youth
Services Branch/Pro-Youth, Counseling
Center, Drug & Alcohol Depts.
University of Washington
School of Social Work
Urban Family Center
Urban Impact
Van Asselt Community Center
WAPI Community Services
Washington State Dept. of
Social & Health Services/Juvenile
Rehabilitation Administration
White Center Community
Development Association
Woodland Park Zoo
Yesler Community Center
YouthCare
YouthForce

Seahawks Coach Pete Carroll and A Better Seattle

In 2003, Seattle Seahawks Head Coach Pete Carroll created the A Better L.A. Foundation in Los Angeles. After assuming the helm of the Seahawks, he launched the A Better Seattle campaign in 2011. In partnership with public and private stakeholders including the SYVPI, A Better Seattle will raise awareness about youth and gang violence.

The key to the success of both programs is the ability to create a new culture of peace among at-risk and gang-involved youth. A Better Seattle will fund, train and empower street outreach workers who work directly with the most at-risk young people and serve as the critical bridge for our youth to community services. These efforts build upon the model of street outreach implemented locally by the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.



CONTRACTED & CITY DEPARTMENT PARTNERS

4C Coalition
Ashoka's Youth Venture
Atlantic Street Center
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound
Consejo Counseling & Referral Service
Deborah Barnes
King County Boys and Girls Club – Joel E. Smilow Clubhouse at Rainier Vista
King County Superior Court
Metrocenter YMCA Alive & Free Outreach Network
Powerful Voices
SafeFutures Youth Center
Sea Mar Community Health Centers
Seattle Human Services Department (HSD)
Seattle Neighborhood Group
Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation
Seattle Police Department
Southwest Youth & Family Services
Therapeutic Health Services
Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle

GRANTEE PARTNERS

1-2-3 Man Up! – Loyal to Life Youth Academy
Alive & Free Youth Advocates
Ashia Circle
Be the Change – The Urban Family Center
Black on Black Crime Prevention Council
Chief Sealth Mural Project
Engaged Theatre – Freehold Theatre
From Anger to Action – Seattle Young People's Project
Game Recognize Game Urban Sports Academy
Get It Right! – No Excuses
Making the Band
Pacific Islander Youth Culture Project
Project Launch – East African Community Services
RSJ Youth Media Project – Enhanced Interactions Media Group
Seattle Southend Youth Pipeline to Success – Friends of Fil STAR
Seniors and Youth Making Artistic History Together – Youth 180
SE Seattle FreedomNet – Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition
Sew Beautiful
Southeast Violence Prevention Community Resource Conference – CHAMPS

Southwest Expressions – SWYFS
STARTS Project
The Belly, The Mind
Trackademics
Urban Youth Violence Resistance Education and Training
Versatility – Horn of Africa Services
Who's Next Youth Violence Awareness Campaign
Young Kings and Queens of Seattle – Life Enrichment Group
Young Urban Authors Project
Young Women's Group at WAPI Community Services
Youth 180
Youth in Action
Youth of Color Unity Project

The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative is a project of the City of Seattle.

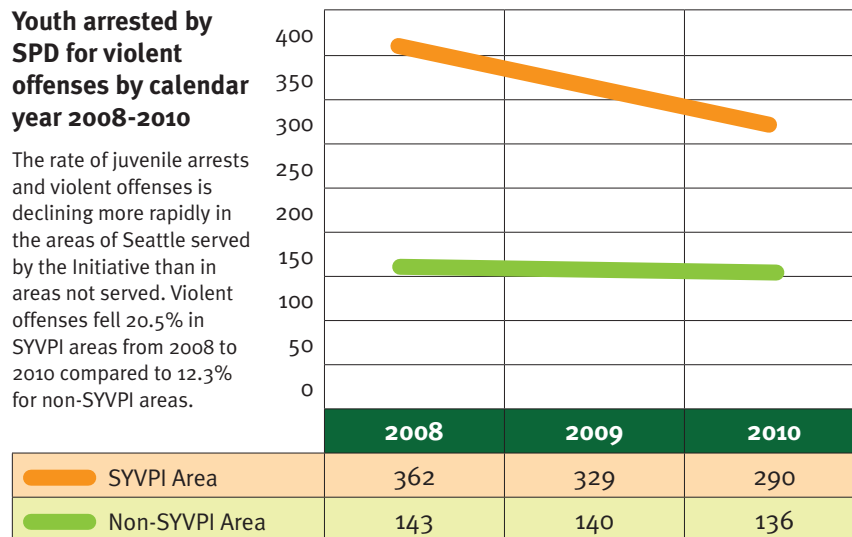
Additional funding received from:

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Evaluating our efforts

Youth arrested by SPD for violent offenses by calendar year 2008-2010

The rate of juvenile arrests and violent offenses is declining more rapidly in the areas of Seattle served by the Initiative than in areas not served. Violent offenses fell 20.5% in SYVPI areas from 2008 to 2010 compared to 12.3% for non-SYVPI areas.



Disciplinary actions in Seattle schools served by SYVPI fell 11% from 2008 to 2010. In all other schools, they rose by 3%.

While funding for evaluating the effectiveness of the Initiative was not built into the original plan or budget, SYVPI is committed to assessing the impact and measuring our outcomes.

All services provided through the Initiative include performance measures. Contracts are performance based. Information on how well the service providers are meeting these expectations is recorded and tracked to ensure

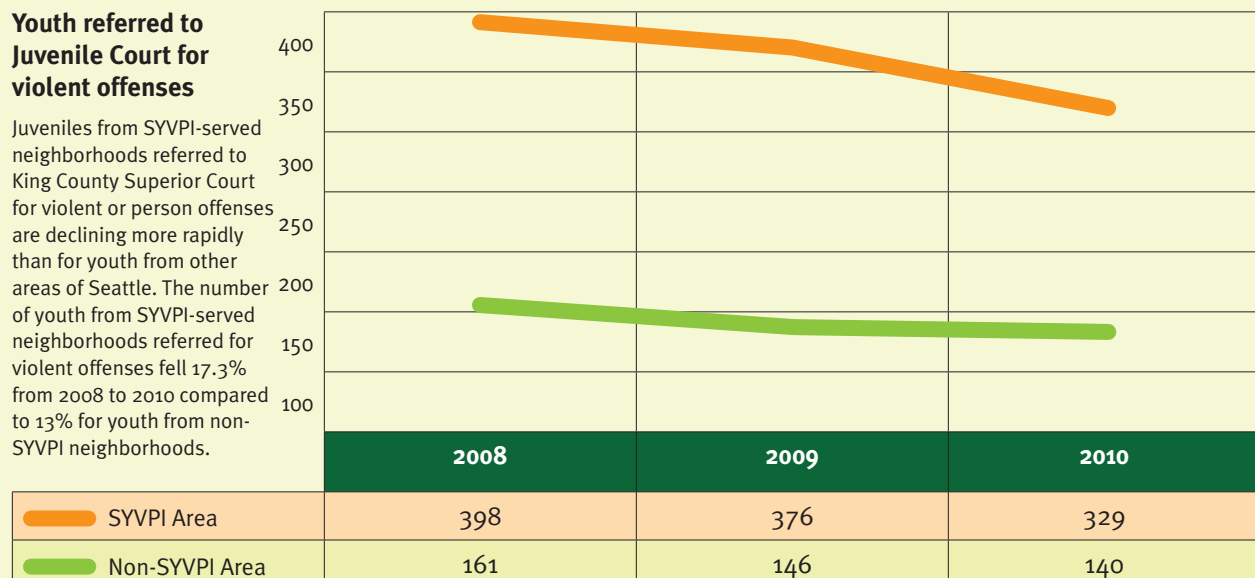
accountability. Most importantly, each youth's progress is monitored to help make sure they stay violence-free and on track to achieve their personal goals.

The Initiative is fortunate that as a member of Urban Networks to Increase Thriving Youth (UNITY), a project of the Prevention Institute, we receive free technical assistance on evaluation from the Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, UCLA School of Public Health.

Two years into the Initiative's work, we are only now fully serving youth across all strategies, in all Neighborhood Networks. It is too early to gauge our success against our goals of 50-percent reductions in court referrals and school suspensions/expulsions for violent acts. Our focus is on monitoring the trends for these measures over time and making course corrections as needed.

Youth referred to Juvenile Court for violent offenses

Juveniles from SYVPI-served neighborhoods referred to King County Superior Court for violent or person offenses are declining more rapidly than for youth from other areas of Seattle. The number of youth from SYVPI-served neighborhoods referred for violent offenses fell 17.3% from 2008 to 2010 compared to 13% for youth from non-SYVPI neighborhoods.



Establishing benchmarks

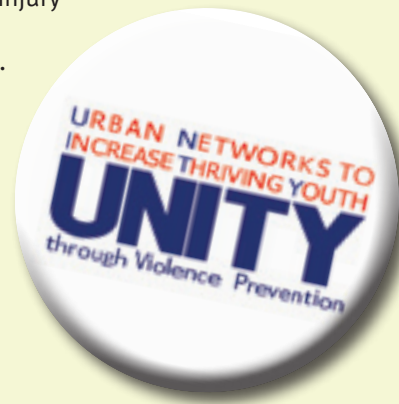
The Initiative established goals and benchmarks for program participation. In 2010, in all but one area, we exceeded or reached at least 95% of our goal. (Note: The numbers represent duplicated youth; that is, youth who participate in multiple services and are, therefore, represented in multiple indicators.)

Indicators	2010 Target	2010 Actual	% Achieved
Number of eligible youth complete the intake and screening process and are enrolled in the Initiative through one of the Neighborhood Networks	374	607	162%
Number of youth served by case management in the SYVPI Network Neighborhoods	385	405	105%
Total number of youth referred to Aggression Replacement Training	128	123	96%
Number of youth served by Seattle Youth Employment Program and employment services providers	225	266	118%
Number of youth participating in mentoring	113	107	95%
Total number youth served in Seattle Parks & Recreation extended hours programs at the three neighborhood sites	400	239	60%
Number of youth referrals completed by Outreach Team	192	192	100%

What's ahead for evaluation

In 2009, the City of Seattle joined UNITY (Urban Networks Increasing Thriving Youth), a project of the Prevention Institute based in California and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and The California Wellness Foundation. UNITY is designed to strengthen and support cities in preventing violence before it occurs and to help sustain those efforts. As a member of the UNITY network, SYVPI has

access to the pro bono technical assistance and training on evaluation of violence prevention efforts from the Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center, UCLA School of Public Health. This partnership is helping us conduct an evaluation of SYVPI with the comparison city of Tacoma that will be tracked over time to assess progress toward our goals.



Nurturing community connections



The cornerstone of the Initiative is the connections we foster and maintain with the community we serve.

Estimates based on research in 2008 suggested SYVPI would serve 800 youth each year. As of May 1, 2011, more than 1,100 youth are directly connected to and served by the Initiative. We continue to work to ensure that we are serving the right youth and that every young person we serve receives the support and attention they need.

Early in the development of the SYVPI model and programs, we held many, many meetings with community leaders, parents, youth and service providers. We knew that to be successful, the Initiative must build trust and seek out the involvement of those we sought to serve. These efforts were rewarded. Not only are we serving more youth than we hoped to serve, but we are receiving referrals each and every day with requests from the community that we do more, serve more, achieve more.

Now that community service providers, youth and families are familiar with the Initiative, they see that youth are benefiting from it. With caring support, a customized service plan and accessible services, many Initiative youth are able to step away from lives plagued by violence. They are getting the support they need to make choices that will lead them to a productive and fulfilling future. Initiative youth are re-engaging in school, joining recreation programs, getting jobs and earning a paycheck. And if they stumble along the way, there is a network of Initiative staff and volunteers to lend a helping hand to help get them back on track.



Toward the future

"The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative's ambitious vision has led to strong partnerships and impressive initial outcomes. Seattle's dedication to young people is admirable, and this report to the community is yet more evidence that a coordinated community-driven effort can successfully prevent violence before it happens. Seattle is a model for all cities working to ensure that children have every opportunity to lead safe, healthy lives."

LARRY COHEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PREVENTION INSTITUTE & UNITY CO-CHAIR

Other cities have learned through trial and error much about what is needed to reduce youth violence.

Representatives from city government, law enforcement and community agencies deeply involved in this work have lauded the Seattle plan and believe we have the elements in place for future success. There is no simple solution for this tough problem. But from what we know from research in this field, from experience in other cities, and what we have learned from the excellent work being done right here in Seattle, we are confident that we will see even more positive results over time.

"The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative is taking a smart and comprehensive approach to reducing violence, and it appears to be working. I congratulate Seattle on the progress it is making. Seattle has joined many cities across the country making our neighborhoods safer and giving children a chance to have a better future."

GARY SLUTKIN, MD, PROFESSOR OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL HEALTH, UIC NATIONAL CEASEFIRE PARTNERSHIP

How you can get involved

- **Be aware.** Learn about issues related to youth violence in your neighborhood. Talk to local police, school officials and nonprofit organizations that reach out to youth and families.
- **Mentor a youth.** Whether it's through a formal program like Big Brothers Big Sisters, through a school or place of worship, or on your own, find a youth who needs support and offer it.
- **Encourage** your own children to talk about their feelings and offer support. If they are angry and combative – beyond normal teenage acting out – take note. Anger often covers up other emotions, like fear or sadness. If your children stay angry for a long time, withdraw from family and friends, or hurt themselves or others, seek professional help.
- **Volunteer.** The Initiative and partner nonprofit organizations are eager for the involvement and expertise of people who care about youth.
- **Donate** to charitable causes that serve vulnerable youth.
- **Contact us** at youthinitiative@seattle.gov or 206.233.7915 or visit the website at www.youthinitiative.seattle.gov to learn more about the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.

Please use these cards to help a youth in need

The tear-off cards attached to this cover are designed to be handed out to youth who may need the services of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. Reach out. Take action. Help us help the youth of our community.



206.233.7915
youthinitiative@seattle.gov
www.youthinitiative.seattle.gov

Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

We are a neighborhood-based initiative serving youth in Central, Southeast and Southwest Seattle. We are people in your community – family and friends, neighbors, teachers, social workers, counselors, police officers, outreach workers, business owners, government officials and many others – **who care about you!**

If you are between the ages of 12 and 17, live or go to school in Central, Southeast or Southwest Seattle and meet additional criteria, you could be eligible for these and other services:

- **Get help** to overcome challenges and to set and achieve your personal goals from a supportive adult who cares about your success and will be your advocate.
- **Discover your talents** and do something positive in your free time. Play ball, perform spoken word or try something new that you always wanted to do.
- **Earn money.** We can provide job training and leads, internships and more for qualified and committed participants.

Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

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- If you are serious about making positive change,
we are serious about supporting you with the
resources you need to succeed!
- Southwest Seattle: Robert Gant, 206-937-7680 ext 109
 - Southeast Seattle: Heidi Henderson-Lewis, 206-436-1898
 - Central Seattle: Jamilla Taylor, 206-402-1030

Who to contact

Are you in danger from bullying or other violence?

Do you feel angry and out of control?

Are you heading in the wrong direction
and looking for a new start?

**The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention
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Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

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or 206.233.7915 or visit the website at
www.youthinitiative.seattle.gov to learn
more about the Seattle Youth Violence
Prevention Initiative.

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